Curriculum Reviews

Purpose

A curriculum review is a systematic process for reviewing BCIT programs to ensure that the content, structure, learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities, assessment and delivery methods are current and appropriate.

Programs undergo a curriculum review when there is a need identified. If there is an external accreditation process, external program review or curriculum audit (as in the case of Transport Canada-approved programs), the curriculum review should complement and support these external processes. For example, while a Transport Canada curriculum audit focuses on the content, a curriculum review could build on this by examining delivery methods, teaching approaches and the use of learning technology to enhance the curriculum.

Priorities for curriculum review are determined by the schools and schools are encouraged to develop a long term plan for curriculum reviews as part of a larger learning and teaching plan.

The curriculum review process is managed by an Instructional Development Consultant (IDC) from the Learning & Teaching Centre (LTC). The IDC works with an Instructional Materials Developer (IMD) to gather feedback, assist the Working Group in analyzing and reviewing the program components, formulating recommendations, and preparing a curriculum review report. A curriculum review may take up to nine months to complete.

Process

The curriculum review is a comprehensive examination of the program and typically includes the following:
1.   A review of the content to ensure that it is current and meets the needs of industry and students;
2.   A review of the instructional resources and learning materials to ensure they are current and that they adequately support the learning outcomes;
3.   A review of the curriculum structure to ensure that it is organized appropriately to ensure effective learning;
4.   A review of the delivery methods to ensure they are providing appropriate levels of access and flexibility;
5.   A review of course descriptions and goals;
6.   A review of learning outcomes to ensure they cover the appropriate skills and knowledge and they are at the appropriate level;
7.   The development and review of a graduate skills profile;
8.   An environmental scan to consider what factors might affect the program in the next five years.

Feedback should be sought from:
1.   Industry representatives
2.   Graduates (at least 3-5 years out of the program) and current students
3.   The Program Advisory Committee
4.   Faculty/instructors who teach in the program

A preliminary report is prepared based on the review of the content, goals, learning outcomes, instructional resources and learning materials, teaching and learning activities, assessment and delivery methods. This is then discussed at a validation meeting that can include industry representatives, the Associate Dean, Program Head and program faculty.

After all the feedback is gathered from the validation meeting, the Working Group meets to discuss conclusions and recommendations for changes to the program and to develop an implementation plan. If the changes are large they are often broken into one, two and three year changes. These changes are often discussed at department meetings before being finalized.

The Learning & Teaching Centre will support the curriculum development that may be required to implement the recommendations of the review.

The Report

The Final Report documents the review process and presents the results and recommendations.
The report is typically about three pages long and contains the following information:

- Introduction:
    - Purpose
    - Background
    - Review Activities
    - Scope
- Findings and Recommendations:
    - Conclusions
    - Recommendations
        - Content
        - Learning outcomes
        - Teaching approach
        - Learning activities
        - Assessment
        - Delivery methods
    - Summary of course changes (in a chart or written form)
- Appendices:
    - Working group members
    - Validation meeting participants
    - Survey Results
    - Notes from Validation meeting
    - Revised Program Map
    - Revised Program Aims and Goals
    - Revision Plan
    - Implementation Plan

If the recommendations require major changes to the curriculum, the changes will require approval from Education Council (https://www.bcit.ca/files/pdf/policies/5401_pr2.pdf). In this case, the report should be prepared to meet the needs of Education Council.

Further Information

For more information about curriculum reviews, please contact the LTC liaisons of your school:
https://www.bcit.ca/learning-teaching-centre/key-contacts/liaisons/
Learning & Teaching Centre.